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# Review of Open Access: What You Need to Know Now

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OPEN ACCESS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW. Crawford, Walt. *Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2011, iv+76 pp., \$45.00, ISBN 978-0-8389-1106-8.*

The scholarly publishing crisis is by no means a new concept. The rising cost of journals has been pricing libraries out of subscriptions for years now. This crunch on libraries' acquisitions budgets has led many people to rethink the traditional publishing model. Enter the open access (OA) movement. Use of the term "open access" dates back almost a decade, but the field continues to evolve. In this new work, Walt Crawford organizes a clear and succinct introduction to and overview of OA, covering concepts related to OA journals, publishing, and repositories. Now retired, Crawford was a senior analyst at Research Libraries Group, Inc. and most recently served as Editorial Director of the Library Leadership Network. He is the creator, writer, and publisher of *Cites & Insights*.

The book opens with a compelling statement in support of OA and outlines the importance of OA to all library types (academic, public, school, and special). Crawford makes a well-reasoned case against the current commercial publishing model. Chapter 2 defines the term "open access" and traces its evolution. Crawford provides in-depth explanations of the various levels at which OA exists (green, gold, gratis, and libre).

The following chapter addresses a number of hurdles the OA movement faces, such as whether OA journals can survive the publishing market and how open OA must be to be deemed a satisfactory alternative to the traditional publishing model. One common argument I hear against submitting work to an OA journal is, for tenure-seeking faculty, the requirement to publish in particular journals (which tend not to be OA). Unfortunately, this barrier is not addressed in this book.

Chapter 4 clarifies some of the common myths and misconceptions surrounding OA, including what the author deems to be both legitimate and pseudo controversies. Legitimate controversies range from the value publishers bring to scholarly articles to the true cost of producing an online journal. Pseudo controversies, according to Crawford, include the conceptions that OA compromises the peer review process and copyright protections become lax with OA.

After laying the groundwork for why OA is a reasonable, if not necessary, alternative to the traditional publishing model, in Chapter 5 Crawford provides a satisfying response to the reader's question "what next?" by addressing how libraries can begin to take action. The final chapter cites additional resources, many open access themselves, for the inquisitive reader to explore OA in greater detail. This annotated list contains blogs, books, journals, open access projects, and others. Enough supplementary materials are provided to offer the reader new sources to explore, yet not overwhelm.

Crawford's contemporary overview of the OA movement is thorough and thoughtful. The author is clearly a proponent of the open access movement. While a more moderate analysis could have been applied, Crawford adeptly attests to the value of OA. This short book is an accessible read and covers an issue of increasing consequence to librarians. Highly recommended and relevant to all, whether or not directly associated with collections management.

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